

The Oracle

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Mission Statement

The Oracle is, first and foremost, a newspaper dedicated to the accurate presentation of the news as it affects the lives of students, faculty, staff, and administration.

It is the primary forum for the exchange of ideas for and about Mount St. Mary's College. The Oracle occupies a second role as a training ground in practical journalism.

Bad Times, Good Advice

By: Rio Hibler-Kerr

It's finally official. Even the White House can't deny it any longer. We're in a serious economic recession - the worst since the Great Depression. The wary economists who've been sounding this alarm for the last eight to ten years are not surprised. So why are so many Americans in shock? How about you? Have you considered what this will mean to you? Right, now, while you're in college, it may not mean much. Parents, loans, grants, scholarships, and part-time jobs are covering your expenses. But unless you continue to live with your parents after graduation, a part-time job is not going to cut it when those loans are due. We all hope to find the ideal job after college - and here's hoping we do - but will our salaries stretch as far as they would have ten years ago? Probably not. The fact is, a recession means less consumer spending; less consumer spending means less company profits; less profits means job layoffs; fewer jobs means higher unemployment; more unemployment means higher taxes to support more unemployment benefits.

Are you depressed? Well, don't be. Yet. We're still the lucky ones. We got college degrees while funding was still available. Future students may not be as fortunate as we've been when donors scale back their scholarship giving and banks become more leery about making student loans. While finding jobs right after school may not be easy, depending on your area of studies (we know nurses are in demand), the likelihood is still good that you'll all find jobs. But will that job provide enough for you to live in the manner to which you were hoping to become accustomed? Even though people are still finding work in traditional venues, many will find that the salaries are no longer sufficient for tomorrow's rising costs and interest rates.

For some, your future after school will be more economically bountiful than the one you grew up with. But for most, the current economy will require some skillful

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Archives
MSMC

Letter From the Editor

By: Cassandra Krieger

On Thursday, July 31, 2008 I received an email from the Assistant to the Vice President of Student Affairs, Valerie Gonzales, notifying me that Mt. St. Mary's would no longer be funding the Oracle. I was told that "due to the lack of student involvement as a whole in the production and readership of The Oracle over the past few years," it was decided that the paper was to be put on "hiatus until a time when the interest resurfaces." I was not only shocked and dismayed by the news I was also, as the new Editor-in-Chief, insulted. I communicated my disappointment with the decision to Ms. Gonzales and received an opportunity to meet with the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Mari Wadsworth. I took the meeting.

I met with Ms. Wadsworth in late August to discuss the importance of a school newspaper. We considered the special circumstances of an election year and the distinct and pervasive quality of this particular historical presidential election. I explained that because of the conditions in this election there would be an increase in student involvement. I argued that the student body of MSMC is more inclined to read a paper that would be tackling major political issues. I contended that the students not only wanted to be well-informed but as students of a liberal arts institution had every right to be well-informed.

While the specific and unique events of this presidential election were reasons enough to bring back the school newspaper, there is a deeper purpose for a publication, a reason that transcends contemporary, albeit influential, historical marvels. It is the idea of the press as a permanent and fundamental piece of the fabric of our democracy. The press is, as Thomas Jefferson said, the "best instrument for enlightening" people, for enhancing them as "rational, moral and social" beings. Journalism is one of the best catalysts for imparting knowledge, and as an institution of higher learning it is imperative that Mt. St. Mary's College take advantage of the stimulating affects of a newspaper.

As the new Editor-in-Chief I plan to utilize the Oracle to accomplish these goals. The paper will

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2008 Political Timeline

June 2008 — Democratic presidential primary results announced. Senator Barack Obama wins with an estimated 2,201 delegates, surpassing Senator Hillary Clinton's estimated 1,896 and Former Senator John Edward's 6.

June 2008 — Republican presidential primary results announced. Senator John McCain wins with an estimated 1,575 delegates, exceeding Mike Huckabee's estimated 278, Mitt Romney's 271, and Ron Paul's 35.

August 23 — Senator Joe Biden is announced as Senator Barack Obama's running-mate.

August 27 — Senator Barack Obama is officially nominated as the Democratic presidential candidate, becoming the first African-American to receive the nomination of a major party in the United States.

August 29 — Senator McCain announces Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska as his running-mate.

September 3 — Senator John McCain is officially nominated as the Republican presidential candidate by his party.

September 5 — Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are seized by the United States government as their ability to back mortgages is compromised.

September 15 — AIG is seized by the U.S. government.

September 25 — Senators Barack Obama and John McCain meet to discuss the growing Financial Crisis.

September 26 — First Presidential debate between Senator Barack Obama and Senator John McCain takes place.

September 26 — Washington Mutual is seized by the U.S. government.

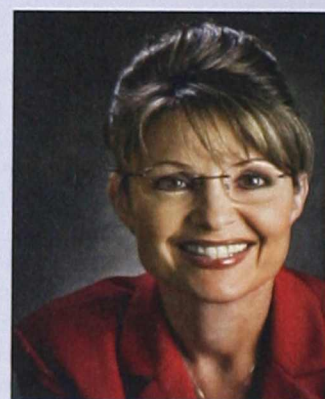
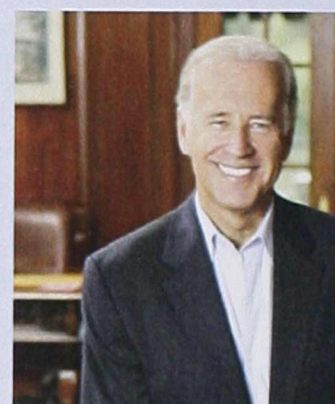
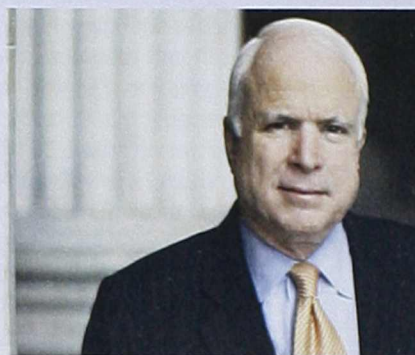
October 2 — The Vice-Presidential debate takes place between Senator Joe Biden and Governor Palin.

October 6 — The Dow Jones drops 800 points.

October 7 — Second Presidential debate.

October 15 — Third Presidential debate.

NOVEMBER 4 — ELECTION DAY



California Propositions

By: Lauren Delgado

While the chief focus of voters rests on the fiery presidential race between Obama and McCain, California's major ballot measures are being sadly neglected. State propositions serve a functional purpose, as these measures are responsible for amending the Constitution of California so as to facilitate the constant changing social and ethical climates of California.

Among the current 2008 ballot measures, several of them noticeably stand to affect the students of our Mount community. Proposition 4 urges changing the California Constitution to prohibit abortion for unemancipated minors until 48 hours after the physician has notified the minor's parent or legal guardian. It grants exception to the minor only through a parental waiver or an impending serious medical emergency.

Proponents of this measure argue that voting yes would ultimately encourage family communication as well as the safety of teenage girls. Those who oppose argue that such a measure would actually endanger teenage girls, placing them between either telling a parent or opting for illegal and unsafe abortions.

Proposition 5, the Nonviolent Offender Rehabilitation Act, proposes that the California Constitution limit court authority to incarcerate offenders who commit certain drug crimes, break drug treatment rules, or violate parole.



In addition, it would allow for the annual allocation of \$460,000,000 to improve and expand drug treatment programs.

Those who oppose this measure, including Mothers against Drunk Driving, contend that passing this proposition would provide drug offenders with a "get-out-of-jail-free" card, and could help provide that anyone who has committed a crime under the influence would be able to receive a slighter penalty than they deserve. Those who support passing this measure assert that it would help reduce prison overcrowding, provide nonviolent youth with drug problems access to drug treatment, and require that the prison system make rehabilitation available to prisoners and parolees. Proposition 8 urges for the California Constitution to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to legally marry, and also provide that marriage only between a man and a woman should be valid and recognized in the state of California.

Advocates of Proposition 8 argue that it restores and ultimately preserves the definition of marriage as an institution between a man and a woman. Furthermore, it prevents schools from eventually having to teach children that gay marriage is the same as traditional marriage.

Opponents of Proposition 8 maintain that passing such a measure would marginalize members of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) community, and lead to social inequality. It also takes away the basic freedom of same-sex couples to marry.

Careful consideration of these ballot measures, as well as the rest of the California measures on the 2008 ballot, is vital to the progress of California. It benefits the

Where They Stand

By: Lizbeth Hernandez

The players: Senators John McCain and Barack Obama. A 72 year old Republican who has gained experience from his time spent in the U.S. Navy, the House of Representatives, and as a member of the Senate. A 47 year old Democrat Harvard Law graduate by way of Occidental College and Colombia University, who was the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review.

The issues: The economy is imperative. John McCain has promised a sound economy by establishing more jobs, ensuring energy security, organizing government spending, and ensuring relief for American Consumers. Barack Obama's plan is to enact a windfall profit tax, which provides financially stricken American families with an immediate \$1,000.00 emergency rebate.

Dependence on oil has created great apprehension amongst Americans. McCain wants to end the United States reliance on foreign oil, decreasing the risk to our national security and increasing potential for raising the value of the American dollar. Obama wants to provide short-term relief by giving Americans a \$1,000.00 emergency rebate in order to eliminate our dependence on foreign oil from the Middle East and Venezuela. Both candidates promote wind, tide, solar, and natural gas.

In health care, John McCain wants to give \$5,000.00 to Americans so that we can choose a plan suitable for our lifestyle. Obama wants to provide health care that is affordable and accessible for all Americans. His plan will build on an existing health care system and will allow Americans to make health care decisions with doctors rather than insurance companies.

Taxation is a prominent issue. McCain wants to keep taxes as they are while cutting corporate taxes from 35% to 25%. Barack Obama wants to cut taxes for 95% percent of workers and their families, which breaks down to a cut of \$500.00 for workers and \$1,000.00 for working couples. There are issues galore. And then, there is your one vote.

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juggling in order to see personal growth and maintain financial security. The keys to survival in tough times are a strong sense of your own worth, faith in your abilities, an open mind, an enterprising attitude, patience and, most importantly, flexibility. For instance, a second job will be a de facto reality for many. Indeed, as employers look to cut costs, part-time work will likely become more available than full-time openings. However, multiple jobs are an opportunity to increase skills and knowledge - plus keep you from getting bored.

Hope for the future is always good - we need to make sure we don't lose that most important ingredient for combating hard times. But a good dose of reality will go a long way, too, toward fighting discouragement. And the reality now is that almost everybody's going to have to give up something they used to take for granted. But is that such a bad thing? The backbone of the current crisis is grounded in unwise consumerism. We've been bred, even encouraged, for several generations to be credit-happy and acquisition-driven. So, maybe it's time we learned to just say no. This new "lean" culture we're moving into gives us the opportunity to examine not just whether corporate executives really need severance packages in the millions, but also whether we ourselves really need that new car, that flat-screen TV, that new phone, second computer, and extra texting package.

Some of the areas we can cut back in are obvious: entertainment, travel, luxuries. Many of you might be saying, "but I already don't spend much in those areas; am I supposed to live like a hermit in sackcloth?" But take another look at your bills. How much interest are you paying on your credit cards? If you've got multiple cards with rates ranging between 15% and 22%, you're paying too much. Balance transfer offers for "life of



transfer" at less than 6% can be found without too much difficulty; consolidate your cards. Or talk to your bank about consolidation loans and then - cut up the cards! It will be especially important in a tight economy to watch your credit rating - don't miss payments on anything. If you're running into credit trouble,

check out a non-profit credit counseling organization (watch out for companies with fees); you can find them on the web under consumer credit counseling services.

Carpooling, public transit, and biking are of course all ways to keep gas and parking costs down, but did you know that keeping your car's air filter clean can add miles per gallon? One of the best ways to keep food costs down also happens to be one of the best ways to im-

prove your health: cut out all junk food. Packaged food costs generally three times as much as fresh food and offers far less nutrition. (Really, is there ANY nutritional value in a soda? Now there's a habit we can afford to give up). Speaking of addictions, would it kill us to make our own coffee, or even just cut back on caffeine, instead of buying it at \$2 to \$3 a cup?

How many, though, will be able to use the upcoming economic changes as a lens to focus on what's really important - to discover what we really need as opposed to what we want and how many will react with resentment, depression, and escapism to an economic reality that's headed toward consumer culture shock?

There are lots of ways to make economically and ecologically efficient changes in our lives; we just need to be creative, flexible, and optimistic about our choices. Inevitably, necessity will take us by the hand, whether we want to go down that road or not.

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accurately present the news to the Mount St. Mary's community. The newspaper, with regards to politics, will publish everything from the implications of oval office liaisons to historical elections. The Oracle will examine prominent artists and their influence on contemporary society and the student body. This publication will highlight painters, novelists, and other producers of aesthetic excellence. Furthermore, this newspaper will seek to inspire students to read, to enlighten themselves, and to become their own teachers as they examine and analyze news.

Comrades Lend Me Your Ear

By: Emilie Riles

I am voting for John McCain because his only viable opponent is Barack Obama. So why not have some "hope" for "change"? Several reasons come to mind. First of all, Obama has said himself that he plays Chicago-style politics. Great. These politics, not the breeze from Lake Michigan, is why Chicago is called the windy city. In recent history, 79 Chicago-area officials, including several governors and a mayor, were convicted of crimes. Elevating this sort of politics to the Federal level is not the kind of change that is good for America. Secondly, consider the company Obama keeps and the kind of change these people desire. From seeking out Marxist professors to befriend as an undergraduate to starting his political career in the home of a Marxist radical, Obama wants to penalize the prime movers of our society. The people who, through their ingenuity and vision, create jobs and make everyone's life a little easier with their innovation. Succeed so we can all live off of you, he seems to be saying. Indeed, he is using the sweat of the upper class to buy the votes of poor Americans (a reason, in my opinion, to deny the vote to welfare recipients). Of course, most wealthy liberals that I know are holding an Obama sign in their left hand, while setting up an offshore account with their right (how unpatriotic eh Biden?). Third, the thuggish conduct of Obama supporters is appalling. A McCain supporter in Florida had his house shot up by Obama supporters angered by his exercise of free speech. In Galax, Virginia, five workers at McCain headquarters, several of them elderly, were sprayed with mace by two Obama supporting hoodlums. I had my car spit on in Virginia. I guess they're just "getting in our faces" like their idol told them to do. Fourth, a vote for Obama is a vote against the American way of life. In America, picking yourself up by your bootstraps is an accomplishment, not a tragedy. People do it all the time. Now they will be taxed

like crazy if they pick themselves up too high. This has consequences for future immigration into our country.

At a time when the economy is weak and the government is running on a deficit, how many of the tired, poor, and huddled masses will we be able to take in? Logic says not very many. This is incredibly troubling. We are, by and large, a nation of immigrants, and if we pay for everyone's boots, instead of allowing them the opportunity to pick themselves up by the bootstraps they bring over, then a lot of people get left out when the money runs low. By the way, all this stuff Obama is spouting about being our brother's keeper? It's interesting to note that his own brother lives in poverty in Kenya. His aunt lives in a dilapidated Boston housing project. Charity starts at home. Just like a democrat to be generous with other people's money—because that's the easy part.

On November 4, I urge everyone to vote for McCain. A man who sacrificed five years of his life for the America that has provided each and every one of us an opportunity for success as a result of our own work. Where people's income is respected as their own. Where new wealth is created, instead of current wealth being redistributed. Europeans like Obama because they view our country as a rogue state, and our success has engendered their jealousy. They want Obama to win, so they can perceive a victory for their way of life. A way of life that our forefathers shed their blood to get away from, a way of life that left them unable to defend themselves against the Third Reich. A way of life where scheduling a doctor's appointment can take months. Let's stand proud as Americans during this election. Let's vote for McCain and say to the world, "Our way of life and government may have some flaws, as all do, but it's sure as hell is better than what you have." Let's once again be proud to be Americans.

OPINION

Why I'm Voting Obama

By Deborah Guerrero

This is a historic election, one in which I have really thought long and hard about. I believe that every voter must focus on the core issues that affect them personally as well as look at long term affects of the presidency. Barack Obama has careened his way onto center stage in the past months and right into my life. Barack has hit core principals like tax increase for upper classes, with a dominant focus on education and healthcare, two core issues that I feel affect my life and my future most intensely. When I look at Barack I see a man who is full of strength and real concern for the American people. I am a staunch believer that government should step in when necessary and create government programs that will help the lower and middle classes. Barack Obama's political career is phenomenal from all his work in the senate and although many feel that Barack does not have enough experience, I feel that if people took the time to look at the facts then they would find that he cultivated great reformation and has fought intensely for education, healthcare and fought against the war from the very beginning when it was entirely politically risky to do so.

Senator Obama has a deep appreciation for challenges within our system, and has put forward a compre-

hensive plan for early education for Americans who are of the lower and middle classes. I come from a middle class family where I feel that I often did not find the best education at my hometown schools. Barack Obama plans to fight for higher wages for teachers and increase the standards for teachers as well. Now, this is a fundamental idea to the future of America. The children who get left behind are the true victims in all of this.

Most importantly Barack Obama's plan for healthcare reformation is something that has really affected my life significantly. I have restrictive health care currently, which means that if heaven forbid, I were to need a costly operation, I would have to pay out of my own pocket, something that really troubles me. I am an American and feel that every American should have a comprehensive and effective healthcare plan. I want to wake up and know that I am secure and know that if anything should happen to me that I would find hope in a system that is currently broken. Healthcare is an issue that really hits home for me. My own father who has experienced a severe heart attack only a few years ago, was not able to receive the best healthcare at all. We had to battle long and hard against the insurance company to cover even the most insignificant charges. It was something that I feel Americans need to have addressed.

THE ARTS

THE MOUNT has a special connection with the Jack Rutberg Art Gallery in West Hollywood. Rutberg's wife, Mary Lou Rutberg, is a student in the Masters in Humanities Program on the Chalon Campus, with her emphasis in Creative Writing (Poetry).

Jack Rutberg has collected contemporary fine art for over thirty years. His latest installment is the work of Hans Burkhardt, a Swiss painter who lived much of his life in Los Angeles. Coming out of the modern era, Burkhardt was known for his abstract impressionist works. He was not afraid to mix art with politics, taking on themes such as anti-smoking (long before it was popular to criticize the tobacco industry) and the war in Vietnam.

In the 1950's Burkhardt visited Mexico, where he saw little boys playing soccer with human skulls. Corpses of families who could not afford the cemetery upkeep fee were dug up and discarded. Burkhardt collected several of the skulls, brought them home, and used them in his art.

My Lai is a six-by-nine feet canvas depicting the mass murder of more than 400 unarmed citizens of South Vietnam by U.S. Army forces on March 16, 1968. The victims were almost entirely civilians and some of them women and children. Some of the victims were sexually abused, beaten, tortured, or maimed. Several bodies were found mutilated.

On the painting, the skulls protrude from the canvas four to six inches. Closer inspection reveals hair and baby teeth. Though painted for the atrocity in Vietnam, the painting has also been referred to as an aesthetic response to all atrocities, including the massacre of El Mozote in El Salvador, the killings in Rwanda, and the Iraq war.

The Hans Burkhardt exhibit will be on display at the Jack Rutberg Gallery until late December. 357 North La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles. (323) 938-5222.

Hans Burkhardt

By Kathleen Araiza

As children of Mexico kicked a skull around like a soccer ball, artist Hans Burkhardt soon followed, picking up lingering teeth and fragments of cranial bone. What others around him viewed as wasted matter, Burkhardt saw the horrors of his time. From this revelation, Burkhardt's greatest works were produced including his 1968 piece, "My Lai", which pertains to the gruesome violence caused by American soldiers during the Vietnam War. "My Lai" represented the dismay felt by Burkhardt's generation and from viewing the work in person, the shock value is very much alive.

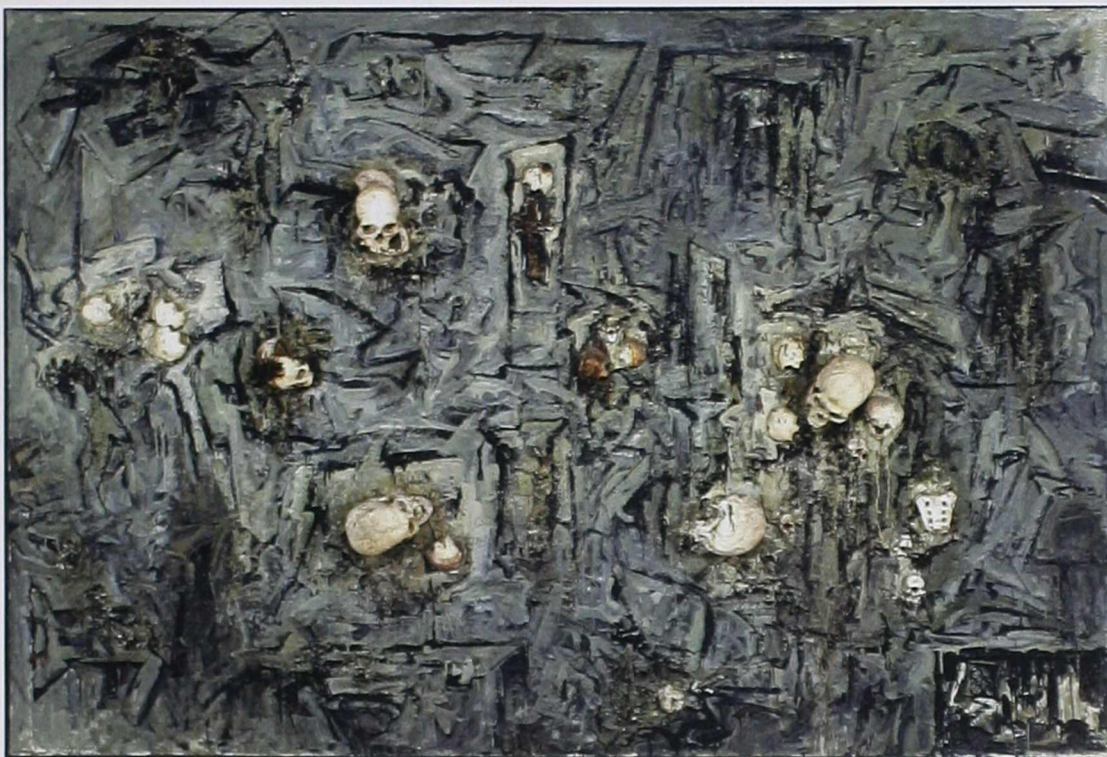
Jack Rutberg, founder and director of Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Inc. in Los Angeles, has been representing the work of Burkhardt since 1973. Within the course of a couple of hours, Rutberg discussed the work of Burkhardt created during the 1960s, work that alluded not only the age of modern art but Burkhardt's interest towards the notions of mortality. As Rutberg came to the "My Lai" piece, he discussed the shock value that cultivated within its first appearance. Rutberg made a comment pertaining to the notion that most of its shock value may no longer be evident within my generation. Despite the fact that my generation was not alive during My Lai, Rutberg is mistaken in his assumption that Burkhardt's art does not transcend his generation into ours.

As I stood in front of "My Lai", I could feel my stomach turn and fill with an uncomfortable heat. Colors of black and grays were splattered on the canvas, creating textures reminiscent of flayed flesh. What I saw on that canvas were images which have yet to escape my mind: a

jaw with teeth still intact, a skull with hair attached, and vertebrae of spine are all intertwined with oil paint. A friend stood next to me in the gallery as I studied "My Lai" and she too could feel the intense presence of the 77 x 115 painting. She smelled what she could only describe as a smell of musk that came from the thickly placed paint. As she drifted closer to the piece, the strength of the smell repelled her from taking a closer look. From this type of reaction, it is evident that the idea of death carried throughout Burkhardt's paintings permeates every generation and every age. The shock value of "My Lai" in 1968 is without a doubt transcendent—it transcends every age, group, race, and gender. The violence that derived from My Lai was the horrors of Burkhardt and Rutberg's generation. However, each new generation inevitably experiences a social horror that forces them to cultivate a new perception on both life and death. I believe this is a notion



Burkhardt understood. Through a work of art, such as "My Lai", viewers from my generation and generations who follow after will be able to comprehend the intention



"My Lai," 1968, oil, assemblage
and skulls on canvas, 77 x 115"

of Burkhardt's work. Hans' work reflects the horrors of his generation and every person who views his work will see the horrors of their respective generation.

When viewing a photograph of a painting, it's difficult to completely engage the viewer. This notion very much applies to Burkhardt, whose paintings are extraordinary when merely viewed as a photograph, yet physically connect with the person who stands a few inches away. When I first saw the image of "My Lai", it was on a postcard. What I saw was an impressive piece of art that consisted of dark colors forming a maze and placed over the maze were skulls. The skulls looked as if they were painted. When I finally attended Rutberg's gallery, I came to the great discovery that the skulls were not painted on but literally placed on top of the canvas. The thick layers of paint, the angles and projections of human bone and the violent strokes of the brush are not clearly depicted in two-dimensional images of his work. A photograph of "My Lai" holds some weight as a powerful image but when viewed in person, all techniques, color usage and bone placement becomes so apparent that the piece can become overwhelming.

Art critic Donald Kuspit, referred to Burkhardt's "My Lai", as well as his other war three-dimensional painting, "Lang Vei" as "among the greatest war paintings...gestures that give Abstract Expressionist painting its powerful, primal thrust...and make clear that Burkhardt is a master—indeed the inventor—of the abstract memento mori." Memento mori, which in Latin translates into "remember you are mortal" greatly pertains to the work of Burkhardt which demonstrates to society the inevitability of death. In his painting, "Gazing at the Stars", Burkhardt depicts the reality of what happens with our cadavers through a misshapen skeleton on its back gazing unto the evening sky. On the back of this painting is an inscription written by Burkhardt: "You will have plenty of time to look at the stars when the worms are eating you at their leisure." This humorous approach towards the reality of death not only pertains to an evident witty Burkhardt but also emphasizes the notion that Hans's work embodied the ideas of memento mori.

Towards the end of his discussion, I asked Rutberg how he was introduced to Burkhardt. He lightly chuckled and simply said it was a long story for another time, leaving my curiosity unsatisfied. Through Burkhardt's work, it is evident that this artist had some internal force to share within the world of modern art. Around twenty-five years have past since Rutberg began representing Burkhardt and the fascination is still strong. It is palpable that Rutberg's continual amazement with Burkhardt's paintings reflects Rutberg's fascination and internal reflection with the notions of mortality. (Article used with permission from *Audemus* the literary magazine)



A Special Thank You

The staff of the Oracle would like to make a special thank you to Dr. Helen Boutrous and Professor Marcos Villatoro for their dedication to this newspaper. We would like to recognize the time and energy they put into supporting the publication and ensuring its continued release. We all greatly appreciate your commitment, perseverance, and continued enthusiasm and hope that the Mount St. Mary's community does too.

To Our Readers:

Questions? Comments? Protests or agreements? Write a letter to the Editor at oracle@msmc.la.edu

The Oracle

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"A New Birth of Freedom"

By: Lauren Delgado

Archives
MSMG

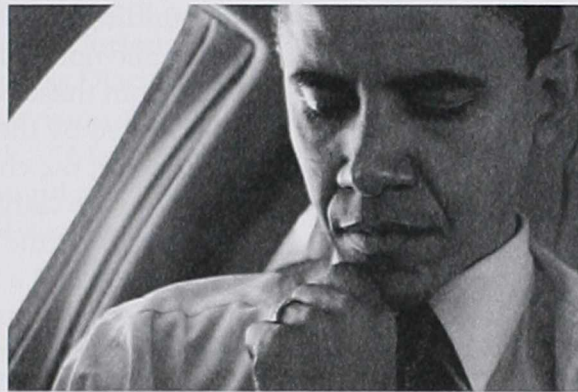
On the morning of the presidential inauguration, several administrators of the Mount, including Student Affairs, the Provost Office, the Office of Campus Ministry, and Commuter Services, set out breakfast on the lawn of the Humanities building. They opened up Hannon Theatre, turned on an enormous television, and invited the entire Mount community to be a part of an historic event. As the theatre filled with staff, students, and faculty, doughnuts and pastries were consumed within a matter of minutes; not a drop of coffee was left. The following article shows a little of the history our Mount community was able to witness.

On January 20th, then President-elect Barack H. Obama took the Oath of Office, officially placing him at the helm of American government as the 44th President. According to the Washington Post, 1.8 million Americans gathered to attend the historical ceremony while MSNBC reported a whopping 37.8 million Americans viewed the event through television screens. The 2009 Inauguration also garnered international attention, securing viewers from Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe.

The theme of the 2009 Inauguration was "A New Birth of Freedom," honoring the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. During his inaugural address, Mr. Obama called for Americans to "pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America." He addressed such issues as our economic crisis, foreign affairs, and our present

war in Iraq.

Since assuming office President Obama has been very busy. He has already repealed the Global Gag Rule, which overturned the ban on federal funding for groups that provide or promote abortions. He also signed an order to close the Guantanamo Bay prison camp. On



Tuesday, the President signed the colossal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act at Denver's Museum of Nature and Science. The \$787 billion stimulus plan consists of federal spending and tax cuts intended to restore and eventually increase a burgeoning of the

economy. Even as President Obama signed the bill into law Republican opponents continued to denounce it as a waste of money, while the President highlighted the Act's potential for creating jobs and protecting education.

President Obama has also approved of a huge troop increase in Afghanistan. It is expected that he will send approximately 8,000 Marines and 4,000 Army personnel. "This increase is necessary to stabilize a deteriorating situation in Afghanistan," said President Obama in a written statement released Tuesday. An additional 5,000 troops will be deployed at a later date.

On Wednesday the President's Foreclosure Prevention Plan was announced; he is hopeful that it will take some of the burden off struggling homeowners by providing them with government subsidies. This plan will be further delineated this week.

How the Church and MSMC are Addressing Clergy Abuse

By: Cassandra Krieger

On January 29, 2009, Mount St. Mary's College hosted a panel entitled, "How the Church of 2009 is Supporting Survivors of Abuse and Safeguarding Children." The panel included two survivors of clergy abuse, Susan Healy, who is the Director of Assistance Ministry at the Archdiocese, and Dr. Susan Salem, Director of Psychological Services from MSMC. President Dr. Jackie Doud, President of the College, opened the event with a brief speech, then turned the microphone over to Dr. Jane Lingua, Vice President of Student Affairs, who was the emcee for the panel presentation.

Dr. Lingua acknowledged the importance of the issue of clergy abuse and noted that it still permeates daily life for many. She referred to recent news regarding a Federal investigation into Cardinal Mahoney's and other bishops' handling of clergy abuse cases (news of the investigation broke the same day as the panel discussion). Dr. Salem spoke generally about the effects of clergy abuse on survivors' lives,

noting not only the physical damage incurred by the abuse but the psychological, emotional, and spiritual effects. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, disassociation, eating disorders, a loss of faith, suicide, and a broken relationship with God and the Church were some of the problems mentioned. Dr. Salem also shared the numerous outreach programs that the Mount offers to victims of any sexual abuse, including incest and rape.

Susan Healy spoke about the "breach of trust" people felt during the heavy publicity surrounding the early 2002 and 2003 clergy abuse cases. She noted the "shocking revelations" made from these cases and the fallout experienced by the Church. She then began to speak about the changes the Archdiocese took to discourage clergy abuse. The Los Angeles Archdiocese is the largest in the United States, and has reached a \$660 million settlement for 500 alleged victims; this is the largest settlement on record. Ms. Healy explained that to stop the

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The Clothesline Project

By: Lauren Delgado

Every year, Mount Saint Mary's welcomes the Clothesline Project, a program for women who have experienced some form of personal violence or abuse and which involves designing t-shirts as a conduit for expressing their emotions. The t-shirts are then hung on a clothesline in order to display the effects of violence against women and the voices against it. The project, which started in 1990, was developed by a small group of women who had each experienced some form of personal violence. Instead of embracing silence, these women strived to find a distinct manner of approaching the sad statistics of violence against women and to turn them into a tool that could be both informative and healing.

From February 9th to February 11th, numerous t-shirts were hung and displayed on a clothesline around the Circle. The function of the Clothesline Project at Mount Saint Mary's is to allow survivors to "speak the truth" and acknowledge their strength. It is also meant to inform students about domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse and childhood abuse or incest. According to Student Affairs, the project has five main elements. These are the t-shirt display, educational materials, donations, the t-shirt making tent and performances by the group A.C.T.I.O.N (Address Choices To Inform Others Now). The t-shirts that were displayed conveyed compelling messages of both pain and strength.

An Interview with Lisa Melou

By: Rio Hibler

You've all probably seen Lisa, with her signature long blonde hair capped with a jaunty hat, but how many knew she had the best job at the Mount? At least that's what Lisa thinks, and I think you'll agree. As her title states, it's Lisa's job to manage all the events at both Doheny and Chalon, but "events" means more than receiving visitors and setting up AV and tables. One of the ways that Mount St. Mary's College raises money is by renting its campuses as a location for movies, television and commercials – the Mansion at Doheny is a particular favorite of movie location scouts. As a result, Lisa has had the chance to participate in the making of a number of movies, including "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," "The Princess Diaries," and "Catch Me If You Can," and television shows, such as "House, M.D.," "Chuck," "Mad Men," and "The Mentalist." As you might imagine, she's also had the chance to meet some stars in the process:

Oracle: What are some of your most memorable meetings with the stars of the movies MSMC has hosted?

Lisa Melou: I remember my initial meeting of Brad Pitt: the guard called me on the radio to say that someone had gone past Security on a motorcycle, headed toward the Mansion. I was near the Mansion, so I went to investigate. The motorcycle was stopped in one of the sisters' spaces and I approached the person getting off the bike, to ask him to leave. I got as far as, "Excuse me ..." when he turned around and smiled and said, "Uh-oh. Am I in trouble already?" Brad got to stay where he was, with the sisters' permission. By the way, the baby "Benjamin," at the end of "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," was Brad's own child. Another great memory for me is of a music video done in the Mansion with Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood. Two sisters and I were sitting in the Great Hall, hoping to get a glimpse of Garth ... He walked in the front door, saw us sitting on a couch and said, "Well, hi! Are you the

welcoming committee?" I answered him, "Not only do we welcome you, we're your backup singers for the day." "Well, come on then," he said, "let's get going!" He took us to meet Trisha in the Pompeian Room and let us stay the whole afternoon while they filmed, explaining how things were done and what the final would look like. Although the song was absolutely beautiful, unfortunately the video was never released. But we had a private showing and a marvelous time. Fortunately, he never asked us to sing.

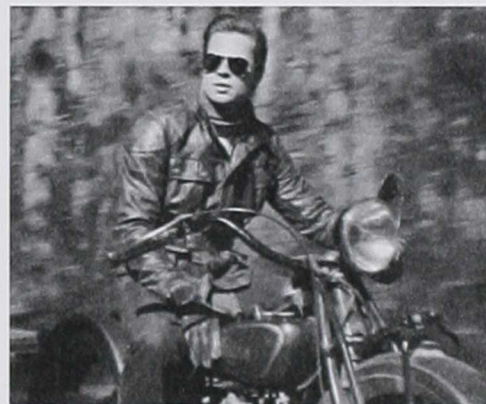
Oracle: I'm surprised, knowing how stressful filming can be and also how, nowadays, most sets are tighter than Fort Knox, to hear of that kind of generosity from the actors.

LM: The majority of actors who come to Doheny or Chalon really enjoy our campuses. They love the special ambiance

and respond to that feeling when they come here. They really are, in general, very generous with their time and understand that filming is an interruption to our regular business.

Oracle: We do have beautiful campuses.

LM: The person who was absolutely the nicest was Tony Shalhoub, who filmed a couple Episodes of "Monk" here at Chalon. He was a kick, just charming; he actually asked some students to join him during a break and they had a little film industry discussion about how to get into the business, etc. Another actor who was really gracious was Hugh Laurie from "House, M.D.." During the filming of "¡Three Amigos!," Martin Short not only introduced himself to everybody but did a dance on the top of the Mansion's South Porch balcony wall.



rampant abuse, the Archdiocese has distributed a booklet of rules, and established a hotline. While she promised that the Victims Assistance Ministry is the "safest place for any complaint about anyone," Mary, one of the panel's survivors of clergy abuse, noted that she couldn't count "the number of doors slammed" in her face when she came forward. Lastly, Ms. Healy also explained that Cardinal Mahoney, who is now undergoing Grand Jury proceedings, had set up an oversight board for abuse cases.

The two survivors of priest sexual abuse, Mary and Anne, spoke. Mary, a spunky surfer and student at Loyola University, told the small audience that as a young girl the "church became home, nuns became my mothers and priests became my fathers." She explained that after she was abused by a Priest, she felt that the "shame" she felt was hers "and not his." Mary came forward to a Sister at the Church, and explained that the Sister "put her finger up to her lips" and said, 'Yes, I know.'" Mary was not only abused by the Priest but by a nun as well. "She beat me until I passed out," said Mary "I thought, I don't want this faith and I felt it drain out of me." As a result of the psychological damage incurred by the abuse Mary became a prostitute. Because of people within the Church who came forth to help her, Mary returned to Catholic faith, and is now a student of theology.

Anne, a very quiet woman, explained that after her "attack" in 1966, a "perverseness of the trauma" overcame her and she lived life believing she was "unlovable, eternally." She experienced, what she called, "soul murder." She approached the Archdiocese of Los Angeles with her story after her own diocese closed its doors to her. She explained that her diocese withdrew its Victim's Support services from her on the advice of their attorneys for fear of litigation. Anne suffered a "churning, gut-wrenching shame and embarrassment." She finally was able to tell

her story to Cardinal Mahoney, who offered an apology. Neither Mary nor Anne were able to press charges on their attackers, as the statute of limitations had expired.

When Ms. Healy, Director of Assistance Ministry, was asked if she had any comment on the investigation into Cardinal Mahoney she responded, "No, I do not have a comment. I pray the truth gets out." Professor Marcos M. Villatoro of the English Department, who has publicly stated his own survival of incest and clergy abuse, commented, "True justice needs to be done. We can articulate a certain rage. What is going to happen to bring about true justice through criminal charges?"

A discussion ensued between Professor Villatoro and the two visiting speakers, regarding individual victims who choose to stay in the Church, while others choose to leave. "That is important," said Dr. Salem, ending the panel discussion, "individuals who have been abused, in order to heal, must make their own journey."

Approximately seven students were present at the panel presentation (an estimated 45 students attended a similar panel held at Doheny two days previous). This was not a surprising number considering the Mount St. Mary's Administration's advertisement effort. On January 26, 2009 an email was sent to students informing them that the panel would be held the next day, January 27 at the Doheny Campus. On January 28 the administration released one email around midday to the students explaining that the same panel would be present the next day, January 29 at Chalon in the Campus Center, a room that has remained almost uninhabited by students for a year. The low attendance was also predictable considering that on the same day, and at the same time, the Associated Student Body representatives were hosting an event in which free ipods were distributed. "Our ASB event was planned and advertised for weeks in advance," stated ASB President Danielle Fajardo.

*If you are struggling with Depression, Anxiety,
or Abuse-related issues, the Mount offers services.
Call Dr. Susan Salem at (310) 954-4110*

continued from page 3

Oracle: Do students ever get to participate in any of the shows?

LM: No, the union laws prohibit it; they have to be union members. The production companies bring in their own union extras through a casting agency. The only time it ever happened that students were used was when "O.C." filmed here, and for a couple of days they used students as "walk-through" background atmosphere for the high school scenes.

Oracle: What do you like best about your job?

LM: The job itself is really fun because I meet so many different people. I market our college in order to bring in different resources during the summer. The summertime for me is entirely different. We have groups that come in and hold conferences and workshops, and stay in residence the dorms. From mid-May to the first week of August, I become the campus dorm mother. I have Summer Conference Assistants, students who work and stay on as group concierges during the summer; they live on campus and help care for the guests 24/7. I coordinate the conferences and am here during the day, and the students take care of our guests in the evenings.

Oracle: It almost sounds busier in the summer.

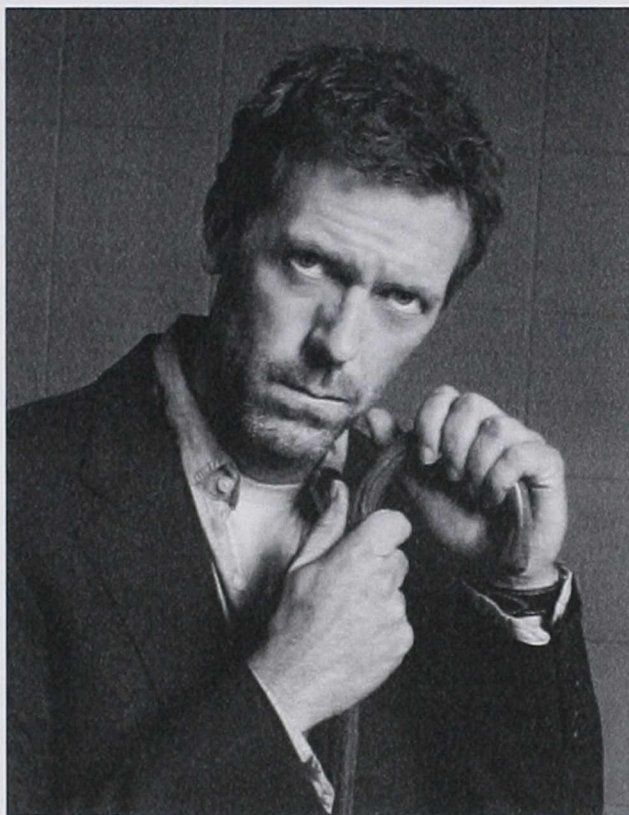
LM: It is, it's intense; there's no break. But that's when I have the opportunity to meet so many

different people. We have a really interesting group of scientists coming next summer for a geneticists' conference on X and Y Chromosome Variations. We should have over 200 in residence and I'm really looking forward to meeting this group. Then there's a group coming of about 200 whose mission is to help build a political base within society's rich and complex "third sector" – the sector of voluntary institutions that includes religious congregations, homeowner groups,

recovery groups, parent associations, schools and seminaries. So, although most of our summer groups in residence are education-related, they're not the sort of groups we can host during the school year, since all require residency.

Lisa can't always be in two places at once, so she has an assistant, Cynthia Velasquez, who is Events Coordinator at Doheny. Booking film shoots can be problematic in that every script must first be vetted for appropriateness: production companies must submit the proposed scenes and background stories for approval, which

process alone loses more business than it gains. Then there are the logistics of parking that puts further constraints on scheduling. Plus, location bookings overall are a little down this year, not so much from the economy but rather the tentative SAG walk-out that never happened last fall. As a result, new film projects are behind. But that doesn't mean Lisa is any less busy. She's still hard at work, coming up with new ways to keep Mount St. Mary's in the spotlight.



Student Focus

By: Cassandra Krieger



In the fall of 2008 two Mount St. Mary's students traveled to Washington D.C. to pursue an education with an emphasis on political science. Richelle Menezes and Stephanie Garcia were accepted into programs offered by American University in D.C. Both of the young women were provided with extraordinary opportunities to meet some of the most impressive minds in the world.

"It's really hard to describe," said Richelle Menezes, "sitting in the same room with such prominent figures in our nation's history." Menezes was able to meet Justice Scalia of the United States Supreme Court as well as General Suter. "They told us stories about their lives, what and who influenced them, and their own personal views on what they do," she said.

Menezes, who was present at the Inauguration of President Obama, was also "in the eye of the financial crisis storm, I was even in the House of Representatives Gallery the day the first "bailout bill" was being passed," she said. Menezes described a number of memorable moments of her semester in D.C. "but the most memorable," she said "was meeting Congressman John Lewis." Congressman Lewis was the seventh



speaker out of ten who spoke with Martin Luther King Jr. for his "I Have a Dream Speech" in 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial. He is also the only speaker still living. "He told us about that day, about sitting on the steps of the memorial, re-writing his speech with Dr. King" Menezes said, "It was the most moving speech I heard, everyone was crying."

Stephanie Garcia, who also completed a semester in one of the American University programs, experienced an entirely different adventure. Garcia joined the Contemporary Islam Project while in Washington D.C. and as a result traveled to both Jordan and Egypt. She met the Grand Mufti of the Arab republic of Egypt (the Egyptian Muslim equivalent of the Pope) and was able to discuss opinions on the Muslim religion and the implications of certain edicts. This extremely influential man explained his views on Sunni Muslims and expressed ideas about terrorism. When Garcia visited Jordan she spoke with King Abdullah II bin al-Hussein.

He briefed Garcia and a select group of other students on the current events in his country. "The next day we were on the news," she says, "I felt that I was representing my country, it was a greater experience than any I ever expected."

These two women are currently pursuing careers in political science. Mount St. Mary's offers an incredible number of opportunities to study abroad.

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Write to Marcos Villatoro for more information: mvillatoro@msmc.la.edu

The Israel-Gaza Conflict

By: Cassandra Krieger

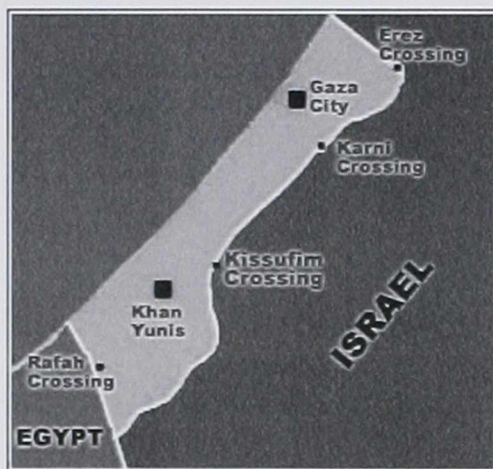
On December 27, 2008 Israel's military offensive against Hamas in the Gaza Strip began with aerial bombardments. Israel's campaign to stop the explosive rockets and mortar fire that have plagued Israel for years was given the codename: "Operation Cast Lead." Israel, having endured the seemingly endless barrage of rockets from Hamas-controlled Gaza for years decided to return fire. Hamas, officially recognized by the United States as a "terrorist organization," has fired thousands of rockets into Israel, aiming for civilian inhabited areas. By the end of its 22-day offensive Israel had suffered 13 deaths, Palestinian deaths, at 1,300, were one hundred times Israel's number.

On January 18, 2009, Israel ended the Gaza operation, calling for an informal cease-fire. Talks between leaders of Israel and Hamas are currently being held in Egypt, which is serving as a mediator for the two. Egypt has suggested a prisoner exchange to increase peace, as both sides detain soldiers. Militants in the Gaza strip have intermittently fired rockets into Israel since declaring the cease-fire. On February 9, 2009, Palestinian militants pressed on in missions to attack Israeli patrols, one militant was killed.

Though Israel asserts that it attacked Hamas strong-holds and sought to avoid civilian casualties at all costs, Palestinians estimate 900 deaths were civilian deaths and more than 50,000 people in Gaza were left homeless. Israeli military officials point out that, along with groups such as al-Qaida and Hezbollah, Hamas

has been known to use civilians as shields. Israel claims Hamas has set up artillery, base-camps, and military buildings in civilian neighborhoods behind schools and near homes, knowing the danger it posed. Many Israeli military leaders argue that the disparity in numbers of the dead is a result of the "human shield" tactic.

Still others argue that the disparity can be explained by a disproportionate amount of force used by Israel. Claims that Israel may have committed serious offenses and war crimes have been made against the state, which has continued to deny all of the allegations. The United



Nations' judicial body, the International Court of Justice, which could normally handle a hearing regarding Israel's actions, cannot in this case as the court only looks at states and the Palestinian controlled Gaza is not considered a state. Whether or not Hamas is a legitimate political group is also in question. Polls indicate that three-fourths of the people living in Gaza do not want to be governed by Hamas. Rebecca Levi of the American Jewish University commented, saying, "I am so sick of people labeling Hamas as a political organization. It is not a political organization, they are a group of terrorists, who for years have been content to fire rockets into Israel while the world says nothing." One Mount St. Mary's student, wishing only to be identified by her first name, Sam, said, "Israel needs to stand up and take responsibility for the murders their government has committed."

MSMC's Best Kept Secret

By: Danielle Fajardo

Colleges and universities all around the nation are often the source of inspiration for societies and organizations that are so secretive, even the students don't know about them. Although we aren't aware of any secret societies at Mount St. Mary's College, there is one "secret" that many students and faculty alike are unaware of: Audemus. And it's a secret that you'll want to know about.

Audemus is Latin for "We Dare" and our campus literary magazine definitely lives up to its title. As part of the Mount community, you owe it to yourself to pick up a copy. Currently in its second issue, Audemus was previously referred to as Mount Voices. Along with the new name, the magazine has taken on a fresh and invigorated look. Its artistic layout along with its contents of poetry, fiction, nonfiction and photographs makes it a daring and feisty read.

In order to celebrate the second issue, Professor Marcos McPeck Villatoro invited the Mount community to a festive party on Tuesday, February 3, 2009, during the 1-2pm time slot. In attendance were Sister Joseph Adele, Faraah Mullings, Michele Fine, Chris Shanks, Maureen Bond, Dr. Brueck, and Professor Sandor to name a few, as well as the Audemus staff. Several students, many of them English majors, were among the attendees. It was a celebratory gathering, which featured Professor Villatoro starting the hour off with a song (*La Canción del Mariachi*), followed by a few remarks by Editor-in-Chief Kathleen Araiza and culminating with a delightful reading from Sharon Keely, one of the magazine's authors.

The current issue features Marvin Bell in

an exclusive interview with the Mount's Iliana Portillo. Who exactly is Marvin Bell? That's

an excellent question! Mr. Bell is the author of over sixteen poetry books and is best known for his *The Book of the Dead Man*, volumes one and two. He is a literary genius in the world of poetry and his writings are worth taking a look at, whether or not you enjoy poetry.

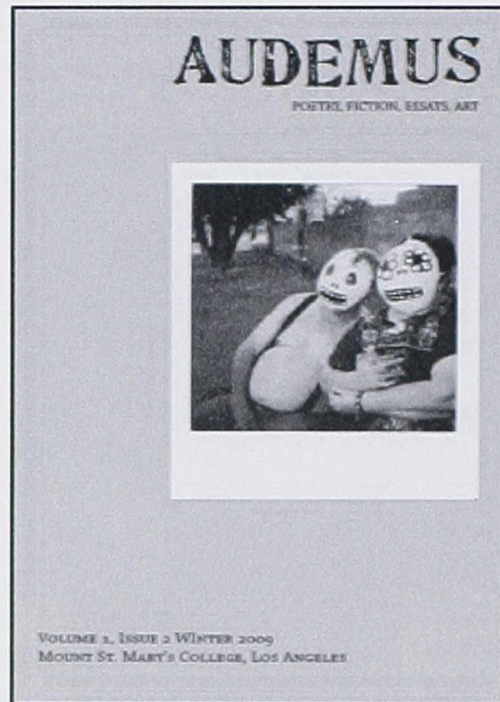
As Professor Villatoro put it, you should want to read Audemus because "Audemus is a sexy magazine." When asked what he meant by "sexy", Professor Villatoro answered "It's a sexy magazine because it's smart".

Once you become aware of Audemus, it's rather difficult to stay away from the green cover featuring a Polaroid

snapshot of an elderly couple sitting on chairs, wearing death masks. When asked about the interesting cover choice, Kathleen Araiza responded that her "grandparents were on the cover." Her idea to use a Polaroid stemmed from her desire to bring back a medium that is slowly fading away.

Audemus is looking for submissions. If you'd like to submit poetry, fiction, nonfiction essays or art, contact any of the editors, Kathleen Araiza, Cassandra Krieger, Lorraine Bedros or Professor Villatoro himself. The publication is currently available at over forty-six universities across the nation and as Professor Villatoro put it, Audemus is a "celebration of the Mount making its mark on the literary world".

It's safe to say that The Mount has made its mark and will continue making its mark on the literary world as Audemus takes the world by storm.



The Oracle

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Archives
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Military Wives at MSMC

By: Rio Hibler

One would think it's hard enough just being a full-time student here, let alone a married student. But add to that being married to an enlisted man and the tension can really mount at the Mount. Two of our married students, Danielle Kan and Patricia Bass, have discovered just how difficult it can be to lead the complicated double life of student cum military wife. Danielle, who graduated last December (she'll be walking with her class in May), has been developing her dual-life skills for a while: she's been married to an enlisted Navy man for a year and a half. Patricia, who married four months ago, is catching up quickly to her new lifestyle as a Marine wife. And student Allison Adorador, too, as a girlfriend of a Marine, shares her married sister-students' ups and downs.

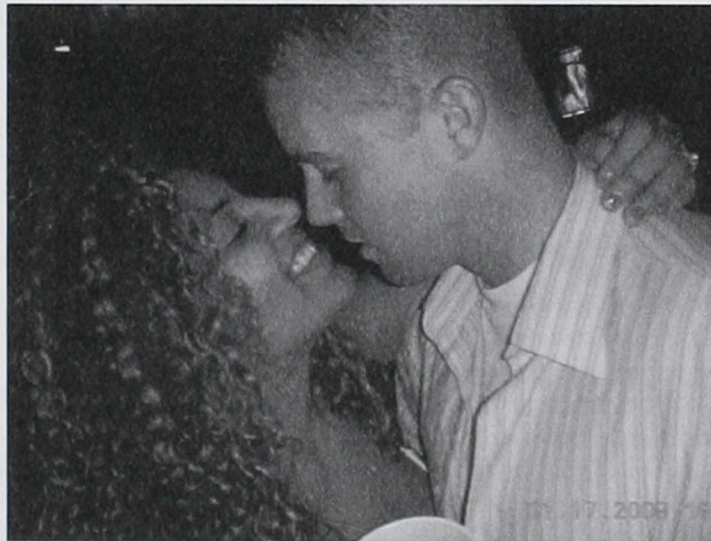
The thing they share most in common is the loneliness to be endured during the long separations of deployment. Typically a single deployment is seven months, but that can stretch to 15 months depending on the circumstances. Danielle's husband,

Jonathan, has been deployed twice so far, to Okinawa and South Korea in 2006-7 and to Iraq and Kuwait in 2007-8. Patricia's husband, Aaron, is now in Iraq on his first tour of duty. Allison's boyfriend, Cody, was in Afghanistan and is deployment this fall.

During being so far apart, critically important. surviving a relationship sort of distance," the easy methods of for granted, like cell not much available is on active duty in a that Aaron calls her are times when he I don't hear from him times when we get worried." Danielle was in combat zones, from him once or

so I would worry every second. He would only be able to call at 3 or 4 a.m., or while I was on my way to class or when I was in class." She also says that he "rarely had internet access in Iraq" and that, though their conversations "were no longer than five minutes," had it not been for those few minutes "it would have been a much more difficult seven-month deployment." Allison agrees, saying, "it gets to the point where you really don't care if it is 3 or 4 a.m. when he calls just to say, 'Hey baby, it's me. I don't have long, but I just wanted to hear your voice and tell you I love you.'" "Sometimes," she says, "it's all I have to hold onto for weeks."

At the base where Aaron is stationed, Patricia says there are only four phones for everybody, and for which there are "always" waiting lines. This precludes any intimacy, which presents another hurdle to maintaining a marriage. "There's no privacy," says Patricia, "everything I send to him is checked; all the calls are screened, emails same." This lack of privacy from screening is due to OPSEC, or Operations Security,



these long periods of communication is "It's definitely key to that involves any affirms Danielle. But communication we take phones and emails, are when your husband war zone. Patricia says often, but that "there goes on missions and for days. There are also disconnected...I get says, too, when Jonathan she would "only hear twice every two weeks,

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Hazardous to Your Health?

By: Cassandra Krieger

While Americans focus on the struggling economy and the utilization of tax-payer money by banks such as AIG, many citizens remain unaware of President Barack Obama's health care provisions, some of which were contained in the stimulus bill. Former lieutenant governor of New York, Betsy McCaughey, called upon Congress to review the health care provisions, which she believes are "dangerous to your health." Members of the GOP are now speaking up against the President's health care plans as well. Many are calling upon the American public to take a closer look.

The bill, signed into law by the President on February 17, 2009, was originally intended to help with the economy. It contains a number of health rules that are intended to affect everyone in the U.S. It mandates that medical treatments and patients records be electronically tracked by the federal government. These provisions have many benefits; medical records can be easily transferred to hospitals, patients can take comfort in the knowledge that the federal system will curtail some hospital bureaucratic mistakes, but, according to some experts, the benefits don't outweigh the consequences.

The National Coordinator of Health Information Technology, a new bureaucracy, will not only monitor every single patient record in the U.S. but will make sure that a patient's doctor is following new rules. The new rules will be based on what the federal government decides is cost effective. The new bureaucracy's goal is to reduce costs. The federal government will also enforce uniform practices of doctors and discourage autonomy.

Physicians may face penalties if they go beyond what is mandated by the federal government with regards to treatment. The government will also have a Federal Coordinating Council for Comparative Effectiveness Research to deal with atypical cases or patients that need experimental treatment. The goal of this council will be "to slow the development and use of new medications and technologies because they are driving up costs," explains Tom Daschle, a huge proponent of the new health care plan. Daschle has publicly praised the European system of health care as it forces their citizens to accept "hopeless diagnoses" and "forgo experimental treatments." These increase the cost of health care in America. Doctors who experiment with treatment, like fictional Dr. House, are considered too expensive in this new system.

Who will be most hurt by this new system? The elderly. By instituting a cost-effective way of handling health care senior citizens will be forced to accept the conditions that come with growing older rather than receiving treatment for them. Medicare would no longer cover what is safe and effective but what is cost-effective. The government would do this by using a formula that divides the cost of a treatment by the number of years a patient is likely to benefit from the treatment. Treatments for older patients will be forgone as the government will likely determine that the cost of a treatment outweighs the number of years a patient may benefit.

"The government will treat health care the way European governments do: as a cost problem instead of a growth industry. Imagine limiting growth and innovation in the electronics or auto industry during this downturn. This stimulus is dangerous to your health and the economy," says Betsy McCaughey. The government is attempting to save money on health care in other ways as well. The President has recently proposed that military service men and women pay for their own service-related injuries.

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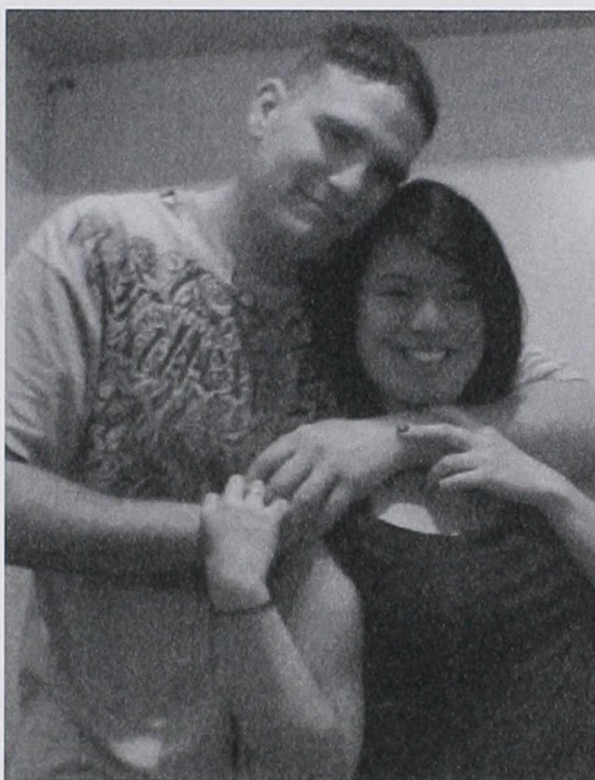
which is a system of communications governance employed by all military branches to preclude inadvertent public disclosure of critical or sensitive information. According to Patricia, "Aaron is not allowed to speak, even to conjecture, on operations – he's forbidden to discuss anything that could expose strategy and endanger lives." This includes discussing those subjects with your wife: "People will ask me certain details, something as simple as his mom just asking me where he is, and I can't answer, I have no idea. It hurts, because I don't know. It even hurts when I hear my husband on the other end of the line and he'll avoid a question sometimes – I'll ask him, 'what do you mean, what are you trying to say?' and he can't answer. Sometimes when we start talking about certain subjects we get cut off; there are certain things that cannot be talked about." Danielle adds, "This is why anyone deployed is not allowed to take pictures, unless they are professional photographers assigned to take military photos."

Needless to say, stress management becomes a priority for someone whose loved one is overseas in a war zone. The worst stressor is worry. The most successful military wives become very pragmatic about managing worry and fear, and Allison is well on her way to understanding this. "There really is no point in anticipating the worst and indulging in 'what ifs,' she says, "it does not help either of us or our relationship." Allison acknowledges that practicality doesn't come easily though: "I really don't know how much harder this next deployment is going to be; I expect that my anxiety and worry for him will increase. We will just have to take everything as it comes." Patricia also says that she worries "a lot," but tries not to because Aaron has asked that she not worry. Instead, she finds strength in prayer. "I have gotten closer to God through this deployment; I pray, and it gives me a lot of hope and strength." Still, there are days when she finds that calm to be elusive because, as an Infantry Marine in a fire unit, her husband has got the "most dangerous" job. Danielle, whose husband is a Navy Corpsman, has achieved a practical outlook: "At times I

would worry, but I knew that if something bad were to happen while he was on a deployment, I would be contacted immediately. I was thankful for that; it made it a little easier to sleep at night. However, worrying is just part of being a spouse; even if your husband is not in the military, you still worry about him."

It's not just the wives who worry. One might think that an enlisted man would feel more of a sense of security while deployed – more "supported" and secure than a single, unattached man. Oddly, being married, at least for younger men, often produces the opposite effect. In 2005,

the Defense Department announced a large jump in divorce rates for deployed men and commissioned a study to define the numbers better. Though the study ultimately found only a .5% increase in divorces in enlisted men for the Army and Marines and a drop in divorces for the Navy (Air Force percentages remained roughly the same), perception remains high among the ranks of the armed forces for the spectre of divorce. This awareness, fueled by concerns of fidelity and aggravated by the natural worries that a man in the position of "provider" has for his spouse, can produce huge amounts of stress. As Patricia puts it: "a lot of the married Marines feel it's tougher



because they have the pressure of taking care of their wives. They worry about their wives' well-being and are concerned that they can't be there to protect them. The single marines use the platoon and their units more for their support, they're less distracted. The recently married guys are under more stress, trying to support a new relationship." Most military wives are aware of and sensitive to this type of stress on their men and do their best to minimize it. Patricia advises that, "There needs to be a lot of continuous love to remind your husband that you are waiting for him faithfully and patiently while he is deployed; he needs to be reminded in order to give him strength and focus. In order to help Cody, who is an Infantry Marine, keep his mind at ease, Allison says, "I stay strong.

The Ghost of Mount St. Mary's

By: Lauren Delgado

Nuns floating down hallways, their garments inhabited by nothing but dusky silhouettes. Shadows with human outlines watching every move you make, following you as you make your way through campus. A little boy gazes at you as you sleep. Not speaking. Just watching. Smiling.

One of the most noted trademarks of Mount Saint Mary's is its predisposition for eerie encounters with indistinct beings and figures. Many students from both the Doheny campus as well as the Chalon campus have shared their encounters with such ghostly and spiritual apparitions. It is claimed that an entire English class on the Chalon Campus experienced a poltergeist during an open reading of John Keats' poem, "This Living Hand." During the poem's reading, students allege that the classroom door, one that cannot be opened without the turning of its knob, opened suddenly and slammed shut just as quickly.

Erika Benitez claims that she and her boyfriend caught sight of a faceless nun, dressed in a white habit, floating across the hall in the McIntyre building at Doheny. Vanessa Ramos alleges that, on more than one occasion, she saw a ghost that appeared as a little boy in her room on the 3rd floor of Carondelet. According to Ms. Ramos, he wore "a brown hat, a brown vest, and little trouser shorts." "He liked watching me get ready, she says, "like when I was brushing my teeth, washing my face, putting on makeup, or doing my hair."

Many students believe that the Brady elevator is haunted. Some say that a little boy died in that very elevator years ago, and that his spirit dwells beneath the walls of both Brady and Carondelet. Perhaps this was the little boy that Vanessa Ramos saw in her room on those nights. Either way, it is clear that ghosts and spirits find shelter among the walls of both Mount Saint Mary's campuses.



Gay-Straight Alliance Comes to the Mount

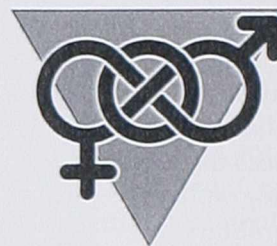
By: Lauren Delgado

After many years of perseverance and determination, a Gay-Straight Alliance has finally been established at Mount Saint Mary's College. According to GSA interim president, Kristen Lee, several students and faculty members have been toiling to set up a Gay-Straight Alliance on campus since the 1980s. Advisors to the Gay-Straight Alliance are Sister Darlene Kawulok, Dr. Jennifer Chotiner and Dr. Pam Gist.

The very first Gay-Straight Alliance was formed in 1989 at Concord Academy, in Massachusetts. Since then, the "Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network" reports that over 1,000 schools across the United States have followed suit and students in GSA every Gay-Alliance official at Mount College

that 20,000 participate activities year. The Straight gained recognition Saint Mary's on January 29, 2009. Incorporated into the GSA Constitution is the CSJ mission, ensuring that the constitution is parallel with the mission of the college as well as in accordance with the wishes of the Sisters of Saint Joseph at Mount St. Mary's. "It was quite a historical moment and I am glad to be a part of witnessing how Mount St. Mary's College is able to embrace social change," said interim president Kristen Lee.

Establishing the Gay-Straight Alliance, however, raised issues concerning the Catholic integrity of the college. "It was especially hard to overcome the idea that because we are a Catholic institution, a Gay-Straight Alliance would be going against our faith," said founding GSA member Linda Quilizapa, who also works at Campus Ministry. She adds, "It is because we are Catholic that we have an obligation to ensure equality and protect human dignity."



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He already knows that I worry for him, but I don't want him to be distracted from his work by worrying about me. Distraction can get him killed in his line of work."

There's still work to do once their men get home, too. After Jonathan's last deployment, Danielle says his return home was "difficult." "He had been living in dirt-made beds with a rifle constantly at his side," she says, "always moving from town to town without showering for weeks. After all that he had experienced and seen, it was hard for him to transition back to California living." Because, of these three women, Danielle has had the longest relationship with her man and the most experience with deployments, she also offers the best advice for dealing with the psychology of re-entry: "When your guy comes home from a deployment, do not try to push too many things onto him. He has just gotten back from a very different place, and is coming home to a new one; he may be surprised at all that has changed. It can take a while for him to make the transition; you need to have patience. If they are coming back from a combat area they will never be the same after everything they experienced. ease stress with your guy. If becomes seriously difficult, or his behavior, have him seek on base."

So what do these ladies Staying busy is important for reach out to friends, family their experience. Allison coursework to keep them with school, planning to she gets married. In the also girlfriends and wives of other "keep busy, give advice, Patricia will graduate next fall down when Aaron returns

have tons of plans for when he gets back," she says, including a big marriage celebration (the first one was simple) and their honeymoon to Italy. Until then, Patricia feels "lucky" to have her family close by to provide a lot of support. Also, "There is a Marine mother I stay in touch with," says Patricia, "she's a wonderful person! We all call her 'Madre.' There're two other Marine wives that I keep in touch with and we give each other some peace." Danielle is finally enjoying some well-deserved peace herself, living in Yucca Valley while Jonathan is stationed at Twentynine Palms. He re-enlisted and they're waiting to move to Maryland in July where he will be stationed at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, which detachment includes the USNS Comfort, the ship that administered aid during Hurricane Katrina.

These women make a lot of sacrifices for their men, but they understand that their men are making sacrifices, too. The sincerity of their love for each other makes it all possible. As Danielle knows: "It is always going to difficult to be without someone you truly love and care for, especially when you see others enjoying activities with their partners, but not being cognizant that they are enjoying themselves thanks to the men and women out there sacrificing themselves to serve the country." She advises others that, "A military relationship is not easy and not for everyone. If you are considering it, remember to be positive and thankful for the special relationship you have and make the very best of it. Always remember that he would undoubtedly rather be with you, but he needs to ensure that you can have a future together by protecting the country.



Taking things slowly will help his ability to make the transition you notice something strange about professional health from a therapist

do to take care of themselves? them; another way to cope is to and other women who share and Patricia still have plenty of busy. Allison intends to continue get her Master's degree before meantime, she has friends who are military personnel who help each and just be there for each other." and is looking forward to settling from his deployment. "We already

Elecciones

By: Karina Macias

Our adventure in El Salvador started at 5:30 a.m., at the airport where we met our leader and group coordinator Ann Butwell. Samuel, our driver, was already waiting to take us to our hotel in San Salvador, the heart of all major businesses in El Salvador. Our hotel, Hotel Novo, was located in the center of the city, where most members of ARENA, the conservative party that has been in power for the past twenty years, are also located.

After check-in we were welcomed by Ann and our other coordinator, John Wright Rios, and received an introduction to the other participants, most of them educators, who came from Minnesota, Kansas, Alabama, and even Miami to be part of these historic elections. Then we received the election observer credentials that would give us access to the counting of the votes and general election observation duties. With six students and two faculty members (Dr. Lia Roberts and Dr. Laurie Wright Garry) our MSMC group was the largest of all the groups participating in the event. It gives me great pride to say that we made an impression with our knowledge, active participation and the questions we had for the many people we met.

Our second day there we met with Carlos Garcia, who is from the organization called "Equipo Maiz." Founded in 1983, three years after the beginning of El Salvador's civil war, Equipo Maiz is a group that attempts to influence national policies at the grass-roots level through public education. They specialize in working closely with communities, teaching the history of the country through a variety of educational techniques ranging from acting and drawing to radio programs. Teaching in both rural and urban communities in El Salvador, they have also been invited outside the country, to Washington D.C., Boston and Sweden, to teach Salvadoran history. Mr. Garcia told us that this was the first time Equipo Maiz would openly endorse the FMLN party. Adriana Garrido, an MSMC student, was able to talk to Mr. Garcia after his talk and he told her that, as a group, Equipo Maiz sees first-hand the suffering of the people when they teach in rural communities where water and electricity are often still scarce. They want to see more government intervention to alleviate these conditions and said that he and his team were tired of pleading their case to what they felt were the "closed ears" of the standing government, hence the group's more public political stance during this election.

While we naturally met with people that supported FMLN, the party that had the popular majority, we were also able to meet with an ARENA representative and talk with ARENA supporters, although all election observers remain non-partisan to better serve the function of free elections. In addition, we were very fortunate to visit la Universidad Centroamericana, or UCA. A Jesuit University, UCA bears the painful distinction of being the site where, in 1989, the Salvadoran military shot and killed six Jesuit priests, their cook and her daughter. At the UCA, we met with a researcher who separates electoral perspectives by parties by looking at variables, ranging from economy to delinquency, that affect the amount of support each party receives. Just as in the United States, the economy is a key concern for El Salvador. After that, we received a tour of the Centro for Monsignor Romero where pictures, personal items, and memories are preserved of the lives of Oscar Romero, Rutilio Grande, and the many priests and Catholic workers whose lives were lost during the bloody civil war. The Centro was of particular importance to me because I wanted to pay my respects to the people who gave their lives to the cause of bettering the lives of so many others. It was good to see that history can be preserved to teach future generations of just what war does, and to make sure that history does not repeat itself. After that tour we headed to the Jardin de Rosas, or Rose Garden, which is where the priests (Ignacio Ellacuria, Amando Lopez, Joaquin Lopez, Ignacio Martin-Baro, Segundo Montez and Juan Ramon Moreno) were murdered on November 16, 1989. This garden has been dedicated to their memory, as well as a chapel where, luckily for us, they were celebrating the anniversary of the death of Rutilio Grande. The first thing you see in the chapel is an engraving of the famous saying of Oscar Romero: "Si me matan resusitare en el pueblo Salvadoreno" or, "If they kill me I will resuscitate in the Salvadoran people."

After that emotional experience, we spent a day in training to prepare ourselves to be election watchers. We were split into groups of different training sites and we certainly learned that the Salvadorans have a unique and complicated voting process that involves many volunteers and hours of patience. I remember thinking, as I left the training, that the actual voting day was likely going to be hectic and confusing, not only for the voters but for the volunteer poll workers as well.

Voting Day! 03/14/09

We had a taste of the voting process before the actual election day on Sunday. As election observers, we

The Homeland

By: Cassandra Krieger

In my sophomore year at Mount St. Mary's College I took advantage of a program called Birth-Right. The project sends thousands of young Jewish adults, from around the globe, to Israel, for free. The airplane ticket, the weeks spent in hotels, the food, the tour bus and tours, were all paid for by the Israeli government and a number of private philanthropists. The Israeli government's official reasoning behind spending thousands of dollars to provide young Jewish people with a free vacation is "to diminish the growing division between Israel and Jewish communities around the world." It was one of the best trips of my life. I love Israel. It's the vessel of all my Jewish beliefs, and roused in me my love for my Jewish traditions.

And it was partially paid for by fundamentalist Christians.

Which begs the question: Why would evangelical Christians be so concerned about getting Jewish Americans to Israel?

Evangelical Protestants and Episcopalians are often staunch supporters of the state of Israel and its Jewish inhabitants. Large organizations, such as the Christian Friends of Israel, and Megachurches such as Lakewood and Cornerstone, coordinate mass donations, giving Israel millions of dollars a year. These donations allow the Israeli government to offer numerous programs for Jewish people. I did a little digging to understand the reason Christian institutions were contributing and supporting Israel, and what I found was both informative and surprising.

According to Former Rep. Tom DeLay, and Pastor John Hagee of Cornerstone Megachurch, the Bible commands that the people of the world, specifically Christians, support Israel. They cite Isaiah 62:1, which states, "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch." I asked a friend of mine, who currently attends a Megachurch, about the practice of supporting Israel. She informed me there

was more in the Bible than the one quote. "It has a lot to do with the prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah," she said, "the Rapture can't happen until all the Jews return to Israel."

The Rapture is the Christian belief that when the world ends Jesus will descend from Heaven to

gather up his followers and take them back to Heaven. According to many Christians, the Second Coming of Christ cannot happen without the existence of the

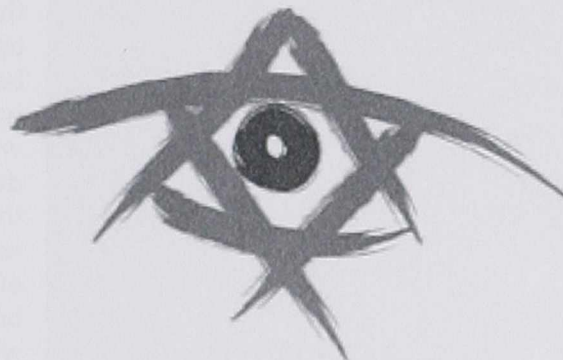
Jewish state of Israel. Israel, as a state, is a pretty new country. In 1947, after the Holocaust and the end of World War II, the United Nations divided Palestine into two parts, one Arab and one Jewish. On May 4, 1948 the Jewish people declared independence and, after a series of wars, the state of Israel was established. Many Christian pastors preach that this establishment of the Jewish State is a fulfillment of the Biblical prophecy.

Christian support of Israel can be purely monetary, but often

includes spiritual and political involvement as well. Christian groups lobby the government, requesting the government's support of Israel financially and militarily. Former House Majority Leader Rep. Tom DeLay's support of Israel runs deep. His belief in the Rapture has a significant amount of influence on his decision to support Israel, he said, "It's what I live for, I hope it comes tomorrow. We have to be connected to Israel to enjoy the Second Coming of Christ."

Christians United for Israel, an evangelical group, avidly supports Israel and the decisions the state makes. The slogan for the group, "Where We Stand, We Stand With Israel," is representative of the way that many Christian fundamentalists feel about the Jewish State.

Meanwhile, a bunch of us American Jews can benefit from all this. A free vacation to the homeland. Just make sure you get there quick, before the Rapture hits.



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were given the option of staying in the city, San Salvador, or going to a rural community. Most MSMC students decided to go to a rural community: some went to San Pedro Parulapan and the rest went to Sensuntepeque. In a rural community, you really come to appreciate the short distances that we Americans have when we go to vote: most Salvadorans have to walk miles upon miles just to vote where their voting cards indicate. In the United States we are able to request a provisional ballot, which allows you to vote in any polling place even if your name doesn't appear in that precinct's registry; we can also vote by absentee ballot. This is not so in El Salvador where voting site boundaries can cover many miles and people must vote only in the area in which they are registered. Some lucky voters are able to catch car rides to the polls from friends or relatives, but most walk many miles. By Saturday we'd left for our designated observation places to meet with the municipal leaders who would help distribute voting ballots and materials to the different sites for Sunday's election. That was quite an roads of these communities was quite a bumpy ride! There night because it had been an

On Sunday we were we had a long day ahead, I ate French toast with coffee at 4 began arriving and situated jobs. By 7 a.m. the polls were to worry about the volunteers knew their job and knew it had made it seem that the poll but throughout the whole voting sites at exactly 5pm, professionals. I was impressed came out to vote and the sight make it a family event by After a while the voting site, felt like a party in a public thanking the observers for election.

As the polls closed at started. This alone was quite some arguments over disputed how each volunteer involved consensus as to whether or not most of the votes in the area but through the radio we were the lead at other voting sites. meeting place in San Pedro, we celebrating and cheering, and Mauricio Funes, the FMLN candidate, talking to his supporters and thanking everybody that had voted for him. I could not believe that I was standing in the middle of history; it took a while to dawn on me that the 20-year rule of the ARENA party had come to an end. The realization was made even more incredible by the fact that, only months, before I had been involved in another election involving momentous change – the election in the U.S. of the first Black man as President. Though we finally went to bed at 1 a.m., we did not sleep that night because the experience of victory was so intense.

This trip to El Salvador was one that I will never forget. It was especially wonderful to experience it with fellow MSMC students and faculty whom I would like mention because they allowed for this unforgettable experience. I want to thank Dr. Roberts, Dr. Laurie Garry, Silvia Martinez, Karina Gallardo, Crystal Milo, Alyce Gabriel, and Adriana Garrido for being a great group who represented MSMC well beyond expectation. I hope that MSMC students will approach these students and teachers to ask about their experiences, because they have a story to tell about these amazing elections. As a group we would like to thank Dr. Doud for her support in making this trip possible, and, of course, the Chair of our Political Science Department, Dr. Helen Boutrous, for her continued support and her empowerment of future women leaders.



interesting ride; many of the - are not kept up as ours are and it was no trouble sleeping that exhausting day.

up by 3 a.m. and, knowing that a hearty breakfast of beans and a.m. Shortly after, volunteers themselves in their designated open. It turned out I was wrong because all the people involved well. That long day of training workers would have trouble, day, up to the closing of the these volunteers were thorough with the number of people who of many people who chose to bringing their children and pets. which was a childrens' school, park with people laughing and being part of this important

5 p.m. the counting of the votes an experience because there were votes. It was interesting to see gave an opinion and arrived at a to count a certain vote. By 8 p.m. had gone to the ARENA party, hearing that the FMLN was in By the time we arrived at the saw multitudes of people loudly